

This [Earth Day](#), people around the world are celebrating the wonder and beauty of the planet we call home, and drawing attention to the growing threats of environmental destruction and global warming. The data are clear: Nearly every point on the globe is [getting warmer](#),

and a growing scientific consensus predicts significant impacts on water supplies, storm intensity, fire safety, and wildlife in North America, and possibly even greater impacts in other parts of the world. Sadly, it's our fault.

### **Teaching the facts**

Many years ago, I became a teacher to prepare students for the future. I believe that education is the catalyst that makes possible the cultural and technological changes necessary to protect our planet. We are standing at a crossroads, and we must choose the path that leads to a prosperous future, and look beyond the short-term concerns of the moment.

Scientific concepts, whether simple or complex, can take a significant amount of time to become widely known and understood. Hundreds of years ago, Galileo and Sir Isaac Newton made remarkable discoveries about gravity and the behavior of falling objects, but to this day, most people cannot explain the Law of Gravity, what determines the speed of a falling object, or why an astronaut in orbit appears to be weightless. Many adults have difficulty explaining the cause of the seasons, the phases of the Moon, or the composition of the atmosphere.

People can go on with their everyday lives without most scientific knowledge, suffering no ill effects. You don't need to understand gravity for things to keep falling. You don't need to understand how your lungs work in order to breathe.

### **Global Warming: A new kind of problem**

Global warming presents a new kind of problem. In this case, knowledge of the subject will play a significant role in our ability to actually address the problem. If we do nothing, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise, and global warming will continue. We don't have much time.

Fortunately, there are many steps that individuals and communities can take today to fight global warming, but they need the tools and understanding that will help them get started. This

is why I introduced the [Global Warming Education Act](#) .

The bill will create a Global Warming Education Program in the National Science Foundation to broaden understanding of the causes and possible consequences of global warming, and measures that can stop it. The program will provide formal and informal educational experiences to reach people of all ages, including those of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It will provide grants to educational institutions, museums, and other organizations, to create curriculum materials, exhibits, and audiovisual aids to help people understand the role that human activities have played in creating the problem, and the roles we must play to implement solutions.

By educating ourselves, we will replace the fear and sense of helplessness with a drive to take action. My legislation would teach Americans from all walks of life how consumer and lifestyle choices can make tangible, substantive differences, ensuring maximum understanding and maximum impact. The Global Warming Education Act will play a significant role in the multifaceted approach to end global warming.

### Looking Ahead

In the not too distant future, we may have cities full of energy efficient buildings, plentiful mass transit, cars that get 100 miles per gallon, and electrical energy produced primarily from solar, wind, geothermal, and tidal forces. The entrepreneurial spirit of the Silicon Valley is playing a key role in “green tech” innovations. Proactive legislation and technological innovation will reduce carbon emissions. However, these measures will take time to implement. Even considering sizeable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, very conservative [climate models](#) paint a grim picture for the next century. We need to do more, and we need to act now.

The United States uses a tremendous amount of energy that comes from the burning of fossil fuels. Unfortunately, much of our energy use is inefficient or unnecessary. We cannot excuse the responsibility of the United States in creating this problem by pointing the finger at other nations. As the longstanding leader in global warming pollution, the United States needs to [step it up](#) and take the lead on global warming reduction. Other nations will follow. It is time for us all to take a hard look at how we use energy, and to find ways for individuals, businesses, communities, and government bodies to conserve energy resources and fight global warming.

### What you can do

What else can we do right now, to fight global warming? Here are three things we can do right now:

- **Change light bulbs** - Compact Fluorescent Bulbs last significantly longer than standard light bulbs, and use much less electricity. Thomas Edison would be disappointed if we didn't adopt new technology.
- **Turn off and unplug** - Turn off lights and electrical devices when they are not in use. Unplug unused electronics that may use current even when turned off. You can use a power strip with an on/off switch to disconnect several unused devices at once.
- **Adjust your thermostat** - You may not notice if your house is a few degrees warmer or cooler, but you will notice your heating and cooling bills change significantly. When you're not home, turn the heater down 10 degrees or more, or turn off the air conditioning.

Conservation does not always require sacrifice. For instance, carpooling or biking to work can reduce carbon emissions more than buying a hybrid vehicle to drive alone. Improving home insulation, using a properly adjusted automatic thermostat, and switching to energy efficient lighting can save energy, and reduce home utility bills. We can eat locally grown, fresh food, and less frozen and processed foods, which require more energy to produce. We can use less, pay less, live healthier lifestyles, while at the same time doing our part to save the planet for future generations. Find more ways you can fight global warming at [ClimateCrisis.Net](http://ClimateCrisis.Net) .

Every day should be [Earth Day](#) . We all need to do our part to ensure that there are many more Earth Days to come.